

Trends in the justice system's response to status offending: OJJDP Briefing Paper

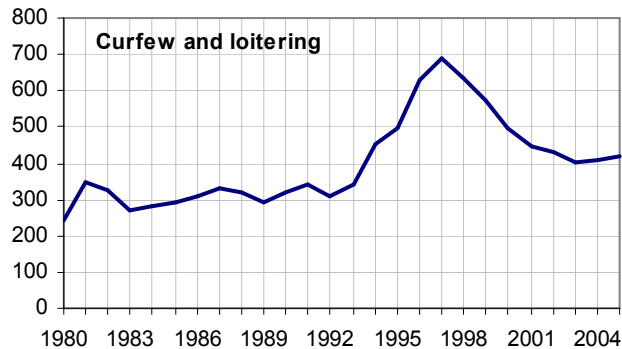
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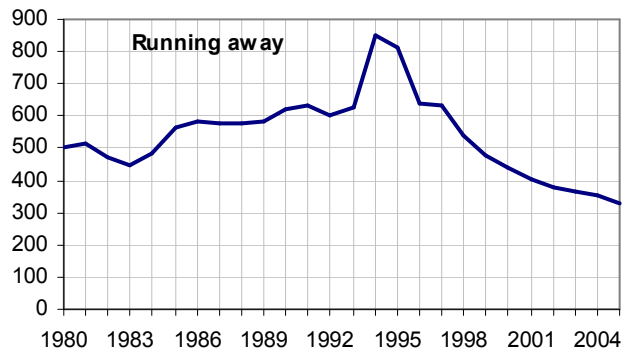
Since the 1990's juvenile arrest rates for curfew and running away have declined, but the number of cases handled by juvenile courts has increased.

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10-17, 1980-2005



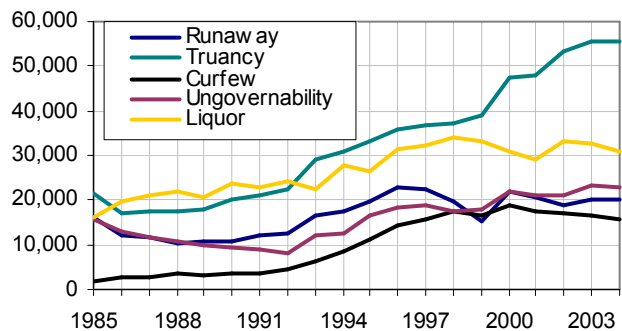
- Between 1997 and 2005, the arrest rate for curfew and loitering violations dropped 39%.
- Nearly one-third (30%) of juvenile arrests for curfew and loitering violations in 2005 involved a female, and 28% involved youth under age 15.

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10-17, 1980-2005



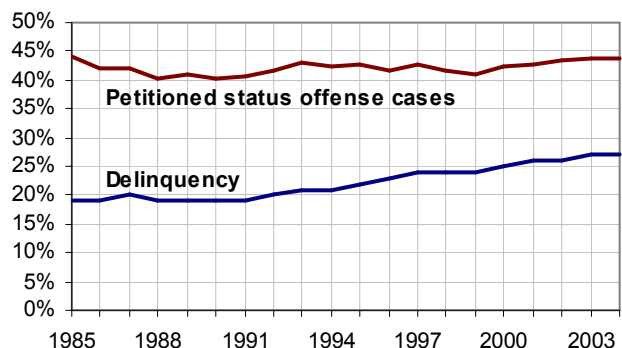
- The runaway arrest rate in 2005 was the lowest it has been since at least 1980.
- More than half (58%) of juvenile arrests for running away in 2005 involved a female, and 35% involved youth under age 15.

Estimated number of petitioned status cases, 1985-2004



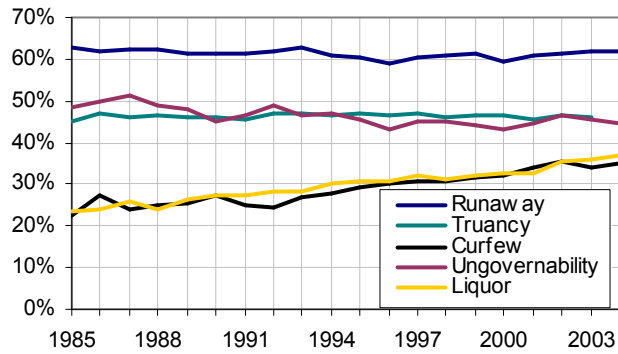
- Truancy cases accounted for a third (35%) of all petitioned status offense cases handled in 2004, followed by liquor (19%), ungovernability (14%), runaway (13%), and curfew (10%) offense cases.
- The number of petitioned status offense cases handled by juvenile courts more than doubled between 1985 and 2004; the largest relative increases during this period were in truancy and curfew offense cases.

Proportion of cases involving female juveniles, 1985-2004



- Counter to the pattern found in the delinquency caseload, females account for a relatively large share of the status offense caseload. In 2004, females accounted for 26% of all delinquency cases, compared to 44% of all petitioned status offense cases.

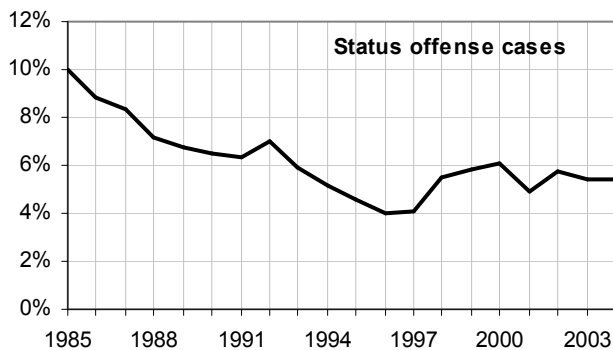
Female proportion of petitioned status cases, 1985-2004



- In 2004, females accounted for 62% of all petitioned runaway cases, 46% of truancy cases, 45% of ungovernability cases, 37% of liquor cases, and 35% of truancy cases.

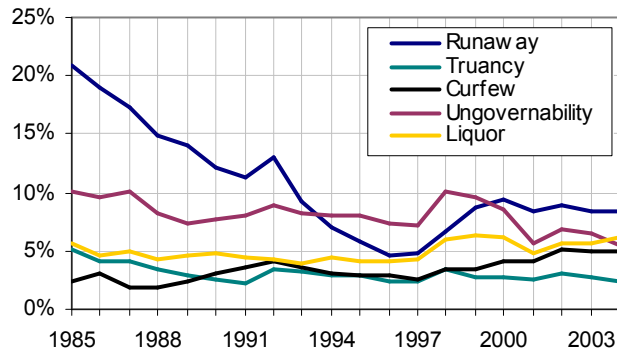
The likelihood of detention for status offenses declined between 1985 and 2004; changes in the use of detention for runaway cases showed the largest decline during this period.

Proportion of status cases detained, 1985-2004



- In 2004, about 5% of all status offense cases involved detention at some point between case referral and disposition, down from 10% in 1985. In comparison, over the 20-year period, the percentage of delinquency cases detained remained constant, averaging 21% per year.

Proportion of status cases detained by offense, 1985-2004



- The use of detention declined in 3 of 5 status offense categories: runaway (down 13 percentage points), ungovernability (down 5 percentage points), and truancy (down 3 percentage points). The likelihood of detention for curfew offense cases increased slightly during this period (up 3 percentage points). For liquor offense cases, the likelihood of detention in 2004 was the same as in 1985.

Offense profile of status offenders in custody, 2003

	Total	Committed	Detained
Status offense	4,824	3,371	1,250
% of all youth in custody	5%	5%	5%
Offense profile	100%	100%	100%
Running away	21%	17%	26%
Truancy	17%	18%	17%
Incorrigibility	38%	42%	27%
Curfew violation	4%	5%	3%
Underage drinking	8%	9%	6%
Other status offense	11%	9%	20%

- On a typical day in 2003, status offenders accounted for 5% of all youth in residential placement.
- In 2003, youth held for incorrigibility accounted for 42% of committed status offenders and 27% of detained status offenders.